

Essays on Contemporary Issues

Volume-1



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First published (Online): July, 2021

Published by: Author

Preface

All the praises are for Allah the Almighty who has enabled me to pen the few lines that follow.

The first six of the ten short write-ups presented here were published in the premier news-portal of Cox'sBazar-*Coxsbazarnews.com*. And the rest were published in the first ever English language daily of Cox'sBazar-*The Daily Tourist*.

This is, more than anything else, an attempt to preserve the write-ups.

I do thank those of the *Coxsbazarnews.com* and the *Daily Tourist* who published the original pieces.

Happy reading.

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A gentleman from Cox'sBazar and his legal battle for voting rights

Mr. ATM Ali Reza Khan was born at Kutubdia in Cox'sBazar. He obtained post-graduation in history from the University of Dhaka. Then he went abroad to the UK and became a lawyer there. Having found that adult Bangladeshis living and working abroad are deprived of the right to vote in elections held in Bangladesh, he decided to put up a legal fight in this regard and filed a Writ Petition (ATM Ali Reza Khan Versus Bangladesh Election Commission and Others-Writ Petition No. 2444 of 1995) before the Hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh seeking necessary directions to this end. A Division Bench of the Hon'ble High Court Division passed Judgment and Order (reported in 50 DLR 58) directing the Election Commission of Bangladesh to take steps to register Bangladeshi expatriates as voters and to facilitate the exercise of their voting rights.

This significant aspect of the whole election saga has, as usual, conveniently been sidelined once again. There are approximately 10 million Bangladeshis living abroad and contributing immensely to the national economy through foreign remittance. They have, despite the court ruling referred to above, stayed deprived of their voting rights so far.

The significance of the right to vote can never be overstated. The citizenry at large exercise this valuable right to choose their representatives to local bodies and the national parliament.

It is the sacred duty of the state machinery to make sure that an atmosphere congenial for the unhindered exercise of the right to vote exists for all.

Given the arbitrary and partial exercise of the state power and the rampant irregularities indulged in by the law-enforcing agencies and the musclemen of the ruling party this time around, a free and fair election seems to be nothing but a far cry.

Those in power have, if the media reporting is anything to go by, given out an impression that they would not let an election worth the name take place; rather they would cling to power at any cost.

The common people are all along found apprehensive of the reign of terror let loose by any quarter at any period of history. They are not to be blamed in case this affects the turnout at the polling centres. One is supposed to take care of his or her physical safety first.

May good sense prevail over all and sundry.

Who should we vote for?

The eleventh general election is going to be held on the 30th December, 2018. Thousands of candidates nominated by various political parties are vying for being elected to respective seats of the national parliament.

A number of questions are nagging the minds of the voters including this humble columnist. The most pressing of these questions is, to me, as to who we should vote for.

On a personal level, I am going to vote for a candidate who is less corrupt and less communal than the other one. I say 'less corrupt and less communal' as I don't think the candidates in the constituency I belong to are not corrupt and communal.

On the national level, there are a number of factors that should be kept in mind while deciding which candidate to vote for.

Firstly, two large alliances are out there in the field. Both the alliances have got freedom fighters and islamists as candidates nominated by them. As a result, the alliances seem to be standing on the same footing on this score.

Secondly, it is important to look into the quality of the candidates nominated. A major political party has nominated family members of notorious politicians topping the list of narcotics dealers prepared by the government led by the same political party. On the other hand, the other major alliance has nominated candidates belonging to a party manned formerly by leaders convicted and hanged for crimes against humanity.

Thirdly, people manning one alliance have been responsible for the irreparable damage to public or national institutions such as the judiciary, election commission, education sector, law-enforcing agencies, the banking sector and the like.

Fourthly, an alliance has deliberately done away with the admirable system of poll-time caretaker government credited with conducting at least two free and fair general elections in the past.

Fifthly, there is an alliance led by a political party responsible for trampling down some of the valuable fundamental rights guaranteed by the constitution of the republic. These include the rights to peaceful assembly, the right to freedom of speech including that of the press.

Sixthly, one of the most serious damage done to the body politic of the republic by the political party leading one alliance is the deterioration of democracy in the country. The common people barring those associated with that political party have felt, over the course of the last decade, that they have been denuded of the right to vote.

Seventhly, the political party at the helm of the affairs of the state now has as of today cared very little for the code of conduct meant for the election.

Apart from the grounds enumerated above, there are scores of additional factors that may come into play as we opt for one of the two alliances.

So far as the untoward incidents and misconduct indulged in by the people connected with the Awame League indicate, we as a nation may not be lucky enough to see a free and fair election taking place on the day fixed for the purpose.

Let us, however, continue to amuse ourselves by hoping against hope that a free and fair election takes place indeed.

History it is, indeed!

The 11th parliamentary elections having been held on the 30th December, 2018, it is now time to reflect on what actually happened on that fateful day.

To deal with the issue, I would like to refer to my discussion with some of my dear and near ones including colleagues, friends and the social media.

To begin with, I as a voter had the eerie feeling that the election was not going to be free and fair this time around. In fact, no election held under a party-government in our country has been so. And for that reason, I didn't feel like going to the polling centre concerned to cast my vote. But members of my family and that of the in-law's had the audacity to do so. And what they reported back to me had me simply numbed and chilled. While some of them were graciously allowed to get into the booth by activists of the ruling party, the rest were not. One of those denied entry into the booth happens to be a lady with honours and master degrees in political science. She is yet to come to terms with the nightmare.

Then comes the happy tale of one of my clerks who had the good luck to cast as many as twenty two votes himself and that too well ahead of the actual beginning of the polling hours.

I have been fortunate enough to be in contact with two of my remarkable friends-one a lawyer practicing with me and the other a lawyer practicing before the hon'ble High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh. Both of them were associated with the student front of the ruling party and are still sympathizers with the party. While the former seconded me in terms of my decision not to vote, the latter sounded very apologetic as to disfranchising the citizenry.

Now about two posts on facebook by two gentlemen from the same constituency in Cox'sBazar. One of them is a former highly-placed official of an international NGO and the other one is a lawyer practicing as a member of the local bar. The former NGO official had the good sense presumably to seek apology from the voters of his native village for what he and his party men did in terms of the election. And the lawyer himself was a candidate who along with his family members numbering nine in total claimed to have cast their votes in the polling centre concerned. But as the results after the counting was declared, he was stupefied to find that he begged only two votes in that self-same polling centre!

Certain it is that the Awame League made history-But what is to be derived from such history remains to be answered for ages to come.

Cox'sBazar: The city of newspapers

There is no denying the fact that Cox'sBazar is one of the most important cities in Bangladesh in many respects. Apart from being the most favourite resort in the country for tourists from both home and abroad, Cox'sBazar has continued to make significant contributions to the national economy in terms of the natural resources including sea fish and crude salt. Cox'sBazar boasts, and rightly so, of the world's longest unbroken beach that holds out immense attraction and fascination to anyone coming down to it every now and then at their sweet will. Named originally after the great soul Captain Hiram Cox, Cox'sBazar has fondly been called the "Capital of Tourism" over the decades. But now-a-days, there seems to be a little twist to the nomenclature. How? Let's see.

One might not now be surprised to hear people calling Cox'sBazar the "City of Newspapers". The reason is obvious. Compared to the number of population of the whole district of Cox'sBazar, the number of vernacular dailies published from Cox'sBazar is too high. There are now exactly one and a half dozens of dailies with the first ever English language newspaper *The Daily Tourist* included.

This state of affairs with the publication of the local newspapers steadily on the increase has, according to a section of the readers plus journalists, got its own merits and demerits. It would be, as matter of principle, better to explore the merits first and then the demerits, if there is any at all.

The publication of that many dailies means, for one thing, additional employment or career opportunities. This is so because each of the dailies is required by necessity to recruit competent people to carry out different day to day responsibilities pertaining to the dailies. On the other hand, the high number of dailies you have in circulation, the more you cover your areas of interest. That simply implies that there will be more and more reports or items touching upon various aspects of life here in this part of the country which in turn would make it easier for those concerned to address the challenges and crises. Besides, more newspapers beget more readers. Hence, the increase in the number of dailies helps more of the reading public make informed choices or decisions.

As things stand as of now, one might argue that the merits of having so high a number of dailies in an area with the lowest of the national literacy rate are far more overshadowed by the demerits thereof. And again, the reasons are too many to be listed here. A few of them may be incompetence, professional misconduct and total disregard for public interest. All you need to do in a bid to grasp the incompetence of those tasked with reporting and editing items is to have a brief look at the headlines and treatment of news. While the headlines and news items of the local dailies are full of spelling mistakes and the wrong use of the words or terms, editing also is awfully poor. The sub-editors and at times the editors themselves have demonstrated little expertise in terms of treatment of news. On top of that, most of the reporters or journalists working for the local dailies are unpaid workers. As a result, they are found doing what they do. They indulge in extortion. They are always on the lookout for earning kick-backs, no matter whatever it takes-be it self-esteem, personal safety and dignity or professional integrity etc. By doing so, they not only tarnish the image of the noble profession of journalism but also distort facts the other way round. Another burning issue

with the local journalists is that they frequently resort to character assassination of their targets in order to extract some cash. Moreover, they care very little about the ethical, sometimes even the legal aspects of journalism. The way the local newspapers recruit people for the purposes of reporting and editing doesn't also inspire confidence. At present, any layman wishing to join the press can make it. That reportedly prompted one of the former Deputy Commissioners of Cox'sBazar to remark that almost half the population of the District of Cox'sBazar is journalists. There is a proverbial saying that journalists are made and not born. True as it is, you can't pick every other man up from the street to be made into a fine journalist the next day. There should be some set criterion for selection or recruitment of manpower possessing the minimum educational qualifications, orientation and dedication to the noble cause of journalism.

It won't, some do believe, be an exaggeration to say that there exists much confusion and chaos in the realm of local journo's of Cox'sBazar. The sooner you make all out efforts to get back on track, the better for all concerned. Then and only then, we all would be in a position to feel proud of Cox'sBazar as the "**City of Newspapers**".

Let's rejoice, in the meantime, over the prospect that better days will come again.

Journalist Abdul Monaem Khan: A Tribute

Mr. Abdul Monaem Khan, popularly known as Monaem Khan, a senior journalist from Cox'sBazar, is no more. Having been ill with Covid-19, he breathed his last at the Chattogram Medical College Hospital (CMCH) today.

While I am shocked beyond expression at the untimely death of Monaem Bhai, as I used to call him years ago, I am reminded of some fond memories I have had with him.

Prior to my joining the profession of law, I had long been in teaching. Lawyering and teaching apart, writing is what I have clung to for the last two decades. As I would contribute non-fiction and translations to the local dailies on a regular basis then, Monaem Bhai rang me up one day. He was the editor of the Daily Dainandin, a vernacular daily published from Cox'sBazar, at that time. Curious as I was, I met him at the office premises of the newspaper in due course. Monaem Bhai surprised me by asking me to write the editorial piece for the newspaper every night. Writing editorials being a sophisticated job, I was hesitant to accept the offer. Anyways, I gave in at last due perhaps to his amiable personality; I got started with writing the editorials as assigned by him, lasting only for a couple of weeks, though. I quit the job as I became preoccupied with other things to attend to, losing contact with him temporarily. But we came back on regular contact once again as Monaem Bhai joined the Daily Sun, a national English Daily, during the very initial days of the newspaper back in 2010. On a number of occasions, he asked me to help him with translations of news items that he prepared for the Daily Sun. I was thus lucky enough to be associated with him briefly during his long career in journalism.

Monaem Bhai was a rare breed in the noble profession of journalism inasmuch as he was a highly educated gentleman with the best use of the pen coupled with utmost sincerity and honesty beyond reproach. This enabled him to work for the premier English Dailies of the country including the Daily Star. Lastly, he died as the Cox'sBazar Correspondent of the Financial Express, a unique English Daily of Bangladesh.

As they say, the void left by Monaem Bhai in the realm of journalism in Cox'sBazar is never to be filled in again. The very smart demeanor he was blessed with and the ever-ready smiles on his exceptional personality will be missed hard.

Dear Monaem Bhai, rest in peace.

The Rohingya crisis: An inclusive approach

As the Rohingya crisis has, as hinted at by international organizations more than one, assumed genocidal proportions and the Government of Bangladesh (GoB) together with her population stand literally pressured heavily down by concerns caused by the crisis, an inclusive approach to the issue is what seems to have been missed so far.

There are, to be precise, a number of stakeholders associated with the Rohingya crisis. They comprise of the Rohingya refugees themselves, the Governments of both Bangladesh and Myanmar, the local communities hosting the refugees and the international organizations or agencies with the UN on top of them all.

True it is that since the recent influx of thousands of Rohingyas into Bangladesh broke out, there have been hectic activities with regard to the crisis by the GoB and a number of international agencies. Various mechanisms aimed at a viable solution to the problem are being dwelt and debated upon. But regrettable as it may sound, reportedly the Rohingyas are not consulted effectively in this regard. As an inevitable result, many an effort geared towards a solution just gets bogged down. For an instance, the planned relocation of the Rohingya refugees from Cox'sBazar to Noakhali is, to many, an impossibility inasmuch as the decision is viewed by the Rohingyas and the UN Refugee Agency as unilateral on the part of the GoB.

At the backdrop of a deal arrived at recently by the Governments of Bangladesh and Myanmar meant for the peaceful repatriation of the Rohingyas to their country of origin, a number of international agencies have reportedly spoken out about the Rohingyas being taken back to their own homesteads and households in Myanmar. Given the scenario of the Rohingya homesteads razed to the ground and the households burnt down indiscriminately, any government that be will require a substantial period of time and ample resources for making room for normalcy to reign supreme. Put simply, the Rohingyas may never regain things that they were forced to leave behind in Myanmar just as they were. Myanmar, for obvious reasons, should perhaps be urged in all earnestness to rebuild the lives of the Rohingyas anew while she must be allowed the space, resources and the time required for the purpose. In the meantime, the possibility of an early process of repatriation already in sight should by no means be allowed to be hindered.

The local communities playing host to the Rohingya refugees at Ukhiya and Teknaf in Cox'sBazar have long been made to bear the brunt of the crisis. Apart from the

enormous ecological imbalance caused, there is no end to the dilemmas that the people of the locality encounter in their day to day life. Problems ranging from loss of sources of livelihoods to that of habitat coupled with the menace of diseases as deadly as AIDS are what they think are in store for them in the days to come soon. Moreover, the immediate negative impacts of the crisis on the local population relate also to spiraling costs of daily necessities and travelling within the area. There are scores of families rendered helpless due to loss of livelihoods caused by the arrival of the Rohingya refugees. Sadly enough, the GoB and the NGOs operating in this part of the country have so far failed to gauge the gravity of the troubles the common people of the locality are in.

While there seems to be no other option than relentlessly pursuing by all means possible for an early and meaningful solution to the Rohingya crisis, it would be better for the GoB and the agencies concerned to take into account the involvement and needs of all the stakeholders.

The horrible tale of a private university in Cox'sBazar

Please allow me at the outset to refer to a news item under the headline “Certificates of the Darul Ihsan University not accepted, students confused” published in the “Daily Tourist” dated 22nd December, 2014. According to the news item, the students of the Darul Ihsan University have become quite frustrated as the university's certificates are not accepted anywhere in the country. While we feel sorry for the students of the university, there seems to be no other option than holding the students themselves, the guardians and the university authority liable for this pitiable state of affairs. Let's see why.

The passage of the Private University Act in 1992 ushered in an era of enormous potentialities in the education sector of the country. Scores of private universities across the country came to be set up following the laudable act of parliament. There is no denying the fact that these private universities have continued catering to the needs of the ever-increasing number of students desirous of higher education. But there have always been controversies and confusions galore concerning various aspects of the private universities. Of them all, the most serious contention is that a few private universities have indulged in rampant corruption such as selling certificates etc. The Darul Ihsan University is alleged to be one of those universities engaged in such abominable activities by way of running the so-called Outer Campuses.

If we recollect correctly, the South-East University was the first ever private university to have set up an Outer Campus in the outskirts of the tourist town of Cox'sBazar. Pursuant to a circular of the Ministry of Education prohibiting Outer Campuses, this university closed down its Outer Campus in Cox'sBazar.

Then began the saga of an Outer Campus of the Darul Ihsan University in Cox'sBazar. As this campus set up in the town of Cox'sBazar circulated admission ads offering subjects such as B.A (Hons.), M.A in English and LL.B (Hons), LL.B (Pass), B.Ed and M.Ed, lots of local students and professionals were lured by it. Particular mention may in this connection be made of the courses M.A in English and LL.B (Pass). Most of the students enrolled for the course M.A in English were practically teachers of English at various high schools and madrasahs across the district. They intended to boost up their pedagogical skills by completing the course. But regrettably, a blatant fraud was committed on them by the university authority. Some persons, who were, I would say, unfit for teaching even at high schools were appointed as lecturers and assistant professors for teaching this course of Master of Arts in English. What would surely have the readers surprised in this connection is that a person who had never passed even his S.S.C exam was appointed as a lecturer for the department of English. Coincidentally, this columnist bears direct evidence to this unbelievable incident.

Dear readers, please stay cool because the story doesn't end right there. There's more. What is it that happened with LL.B (Pass) course? Hundreds of students from all over the district got themselves admitted into this Outer Campus for LL.B (Pass) course under the department of Law. This department used to be very vibrant as a number of senior lawyers and judicial officers from the local bar and bench were engaged in teaching law part-time at the Outer Campus during their free time. Once the final exams for the course were held and the certificates issued, the happy graduates of law from this as well as other Outer Campuses of this university applied to the Bangladesh Bar Council intimating it of their intention to sit for the upcoming exam for enrolment as advocates. But the Bangladesh Bar Council rejected their applications as it was illegal on the part of the Darul Ihsan University to offer and run

LL.B (Pass) course. This was because the university had never obtained the necessary permission or approval for the course from the University Grants Commission (UGC). The students concerned found themselves stupefied and some of them challenged this decision of the Bangladesh Bar Council before the honorable High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh filing a Writ Petition the Rule of which was discharged in favour of the Bangladesh Bar Council eventually.

To us, what follows logically from all these incidents is that the students, the guardians, the teachers and the university are collectively responsible for this. While the students and the guardians should have exercised more caution before admission, the distinguished persons who agreed to be teachers of this Outer Campus, especially in the department of law, should not have associated themselves with it at all.

The cheats in charge of running of the Outer Campus in Cox's Bazar were able to defraud the students as well as the teachers due to their simplicity which cost them dear in terms of time, money and mental agony.

Anyway, let's make it clear to all that the instant column is intended for generating awareness about the irregularities in the education sector of the country and for exposing the truth. It is by no means aimed at defaming anyone.

Finally, let's be educated in the truest sense of the term by way of staying alive to the realities of the time that be so that not a single student finds himself victimized on the sacred way to education any more.

An apology to baby Zihad

Zihad alias Ziad's name will certainly go down in the history of unforgettably traumatic incidents occurring daily throughout the length and breadth of our beloved motherland. This is simply because this most unfortunate incident sharply marked the unsurpassed degree of utter inefficiency and incompetence of the state agencies tasked with the responsibility of conducting emergency rescue operations in times of need and danger.

It was around 4 p.m. last Friday that the news of a 4-year old minor boy having fallen down into the open pipeline of a pump at Shahjahanpur in Dhakawas received by those concerned. While the child's family members were frantically seeking help, the neighbours assembled at the place of occurrence and made attempts to rescue the victim. In the meantime, the Fire Brigade arrived on the scene and tried all night long to rescue the baby, but in vain. There were, of course, signs of the baby being alive as admitted by the members of the rescue team. That's why, they attempted to reach juice and soft foods to the baby by lowering the same down the pipeline. They are reported to have used modern devices to make the rescue operation successful. Meanwhile, thousands of people all over the country held their breaths with their eyes glued to the media for updates of the incident. Some of them even continued invoking Allah for saving the baby. This state of affairs went on for nearly 23 hours with no success or progress achieved with regard to the rescue operation. And then high officials of the state agencies involved with it declared, to the surprise and dismay of all, the rescue operation over. What's more, state officials also claimed that it was all a lie and rumour and nothing else. But remarkably, no sooner had they left the spot bag and baggage than some commoners with no skill and experience pertaining to rescue operations made history by picking up the baby applying an indigenous device resembling a catcher made by themselves. But alas! All was, by then, over. As the baby was taken to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital in haste, the doctor on duty declared him dead.

We the common people of the country are constrained to raise a few questions relating to all that happened. Firstly, are those assigned to conduct rescue operations such as this one really capable of the job? If they are, why did they fail that miserably this time? If they are not, will they be made to answer for this? Secondly, were the devices used for the rescue operation workable or fit for use? Thirdly, whereas the baby was still deep inside the pipeline, how was it that high state officials termed the incident a rumour and just washed their hands off the responsibility by closing down the rescue operation? Was it part of the sheer negligence on the part of the state machineries in carrying out their duties and responsibilities to the citizenry at large? Will those who succeeded commendably in picking the baby up at long last be recognized and rewarded by the state and the society in a befitting manner? On top of it all, why did the police held the baby's poor and helpless father captive in their custody at a time when his family members deserved all the sympathy in the world?

Given the culture of impunity the history of our country is characterized by, we can't but be almost sure of the fact that many of the questions posed above would remain unanswered for good. There is, of course, a little ray of hope at the end of the tunnel. One Barrister Abdul Halim has reportedly filed a Writ Petition before the Honourable High Court Division of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh on the issue. The judiciary, the last resort of refuge for the like of us, along with the authorities at the helm of state affairs would, as we feel tempted to believe, contribute significantly to the desired changes for the better at least in the days to come, .

As we mourn over the tragic death of baby Zahid, we can't afford to lose sight of the fact

that we as a nation have seriously fallen short of our duty plus capability to save little Zihad. Hence, we owe an apology to Zihad and his family. But I wonder whether they would ever be in a position to forgive and forget us. Don't you?

A tribute to Tahera Apa

There are people whom you come across and you can never forget them again due to reasons more than one. They leave unforgettable impressions that you carry around all your life. The memories left behind by them make you weep in moments beyond your control. Tahera Apa was, to me, such a person.

Prior to joining the District Bar Association of Cox'sBazar as a humble lawyer following enrolment with the Bangladesh Bar Council, I had long been in the teaching profession for say, nearly one and a half decades. I was lucky enough to have the chance to teach English in a couple of colleges, high schools and primary schools in both Cox'sBazar and Bandarban. The first institutional teaching job that I had immediately after my graduation was at Cox'sBazar KG and Model High School. It was at this school that I came to know Tahera Apa for the first time. She was then the Assistant Headmistress of the school.

She was very affectionate to her students. She was equally so to her junior colleagues like me. During my initial days as a teacher in the school, she took great care of me. As I was born, brought up and educated in an extremely rural area, I had difficulty adjusting with the overall environment of the famous school located in the heart of the tourist town of Cox'sBazar. Teaching English successfully to the smart students of the school was also sort of a challenge for me. Tahera Apa had a keen eye on all these and that's how she used to come up with useful suggestions for me. That helped a lot.

She was one of the pioneering founding teachers of the school which came into being as the first Kinder Garten in the district of Cox'sBazar. She continued as a teacher of the school until the day that her life was abruptly cut short by the cruel wheels of speeding traffic. The valuable contributions she made in a life-time to the school by toiling hard day in and day out will always be remembered with gratefulness.

She had to shoulder the responsibility of running the school as the Headmistress-in-charge several times. While in charge, she demonstrated her capabilities of steadfastness, determination, impartiality and above all honesty in all her glory.

I can't help referring to some memorable incidents here. Once, while she was acting as the Headmistress of the school, a local vernacular daily published a malicious and baseless news item about her. So she was visibly upset and she requested all to find out who got the false news item published in the newspaper. Due to the fact that I have always been involved with the print media in one way or the other, some of my colleagues who didn't like me that much for reasons known only to them tried to impress upon Tahera Apa that it was me and none else behind the news item. But as she knew me very well, she didn't buy the idea. Later on, when she approached me about the issue, I helped her by way of procuring from the newspaper office the typed copy of the news item supplied to the newspaper by two teachers of the school. Of course, I didn't disclose to her the names of the two teachers instrumental behind the news. Anyway, her unshaken trust in me made and kept me happy.

Hers was, so to speak, a life full of tragedies. She lost her husband when she was still very young. Shaken and shocked to the core of her being, she didn't give it all up. She got a firm

hold of her family and went all the way for the proper nurturing of her three children. Tasmia Ismail Tammy being her last issue fell victim to the same road traffic accident claiming their lives. This Tammy was one of the brightest former students of the school. The second incident that I would like to mention here is related to Tammy. When Tammy passed her HSC, Tahera Apa wanted her to get admitted into South Asian University for Women. Set up and run by the SAARC, it is truly an international university situated in Chittagong. She collected the forms and the brochure for admission and requested me to fill them out for Tammy. I did. What she did in return for me was unexpected. She sent presents to my wife and my first daughter Jasmine Jahan Lima who then was just a baby girl.

As the holy Quran says, there is no escape from the clutches of death. In fact, there is no greater truth than death. Once born, every living being has to face the inevitable. So is the case with Tahera Apa and Tammy. They are no more with us. All we can do now for them is to pray for the salvation of their departed souls. While we do so, we also convey our deepest sympathies to those of her immediate family whom she left behind to mourn her death for ever.

To conclude, I simply can't evade asking this question- when will there be an end to all these deadly road traffic accidents wrecking havoc with the lives of so many victims and survivors?